2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

great to provide some incentive for individual effort and, much more important, it also provides some incentive for a wandering member of a band to return to his home territory at least once a year, for the honey season.[1]

The territory of any band is always ample for its needs. That is perhaps the safest way of defining the size of band territory. Never, in any part of the forest, have I come across any complaint of the insufficiency of a hunting territory, in terms of either size or produce. Nor are there sufficient instances of trespass to indicate that any band suffers from inadequate natural resources. In every case that I have investigated the band has been able to define its boundaries by citing rivers, streams, mountain ridges, ravines, caves, or other locally well-known natural landmarks. These boundaries generally extend one day's march in one direction, three days' march in the other. The shorter base is invariably parallel to the line, a trail or road, connecting two villages, though it may well overlap it. A "day's march" is the way the Mbuti generally define distance, and in practice this means that the first day in from the base line is the longest distance, extending perhaps as far as thirty miles. Beyond this the territory is less intensively traveled, the trails are more difficult to follow, and the third day in may represent only ten or fifteen miles. The base line, similarly, is comparatively short, being perhaps the least hunted as it is the closest to the village. Also, as the forest in this area will have been penetrated by villagers in search of building materials, it is generally much more difficult to traverse than the virgin forest a mile or so further in.

In using this measure of time and distance, the Mbuti do not think of how far a single hunter could travel in a day, but rather how far the whole band could travel, as if shifting camp. A single man could travel almost twice the distance. This is a small point, but serves as an indication of the way in which the Mbuti see the world around them, in terms of the potentiality of the whole band.

The territory of the Epulu band (Map 6)[A] was defined by a series of rivers: the Harama, the Itoro, and the Epulu to the northeast, the east and the south, and by the small Nepussi and a series of hills and caves to the west. As usual, the innermost boundary was the least

[1] This also seems to be the season when bark-cloth manufacture is at its height, perhaps largely because more time is available during this season. But bark cloth is made throughout the year, and fresh sources of the best barks are always eagerly sought and claimed.

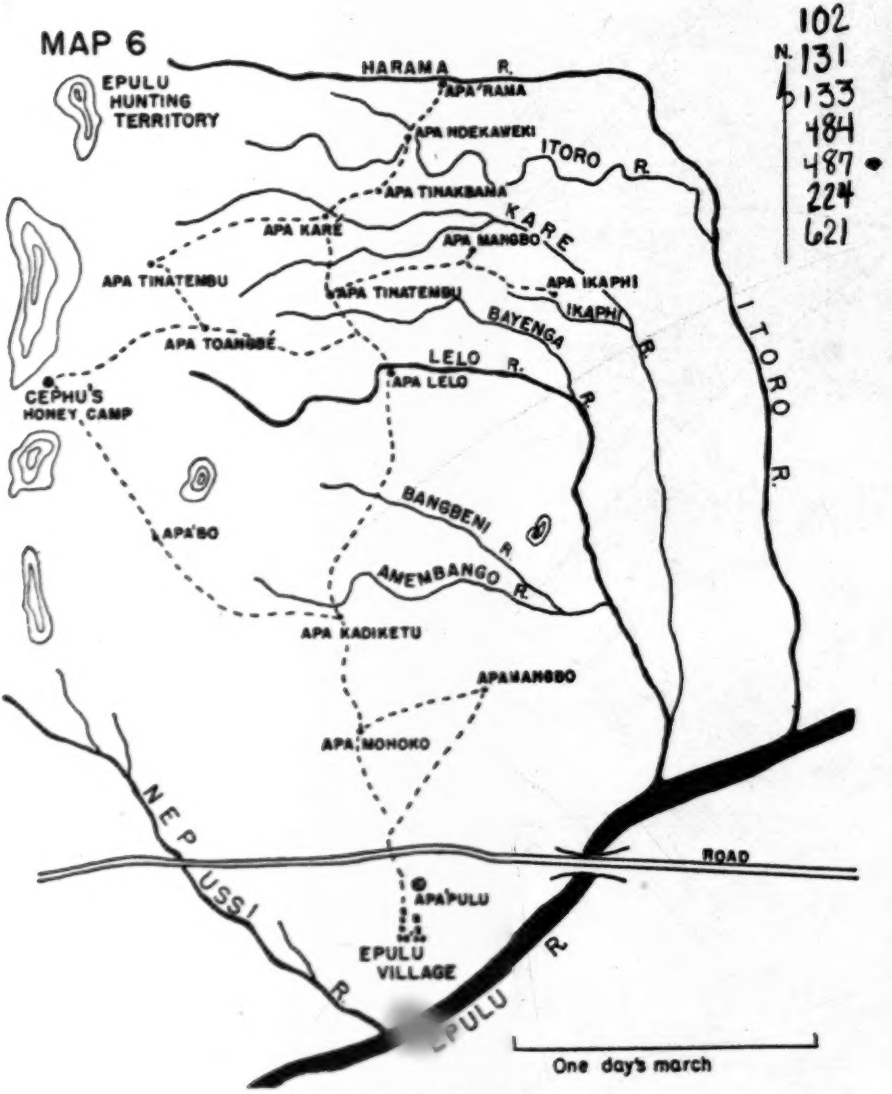
[A] [see page 321 -- Analyst]

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

Arriving on the same day as old Tungana came Moké, who built a large rectangular hut (S) in the center of Tungana's section. The two men claimed kinship with each other, Tungana allegedly having on his mother's side the same great-grandfather as Moké. Endeku, who was a son-in-law of Moké, was also a renowned clown, and the hut he built was wide open on two sides, so that it was little more than a roof. It stood close to Moké's hut and was an effective link between that cluster and the southern cluster, which included some members of Cephu's sub-band. Endeku's hearth became a gathering place for the southern part of the camp, just as the *kumamolimo* did for the north. Njobo and Asuku were received politely at either, but not with any enthusiasm. When Njelu and Betuli (M and L) arrived on the second day and, because of their mutual affinal relationship, built their huts close together, their neighbor Masimongo (K) turned his hut away for no evident reason at all. Betuli reacted by turning his back on Masimongo, joining his hut to Njelu's. One day later Njelu built a new hut a few yards away, still facing it toward Betuli, however. He said he did not like his "sister" so close to him. Actually, Betuli's wife was of the same clan as Njelu, but of a different lineage. Although Njelu's wife, kin of Pangia (P) and Betuli, had left him, Njelu always preferred to move and camp with his affines, even though they usually camped with Cephu, who was somewhat in conflict with Njelu's own, Puemi clan. At the time the camp was built, Cephu was not present, but most of the Cephu sub-band members occupied the southern part of *apa* Lelo together. With them were Kelemoké and Masalito (J and I), who were members of Cephu's own lineage, but who preferred to camp with the main camp, whereas Cephu usually made a sub-camp of his own.

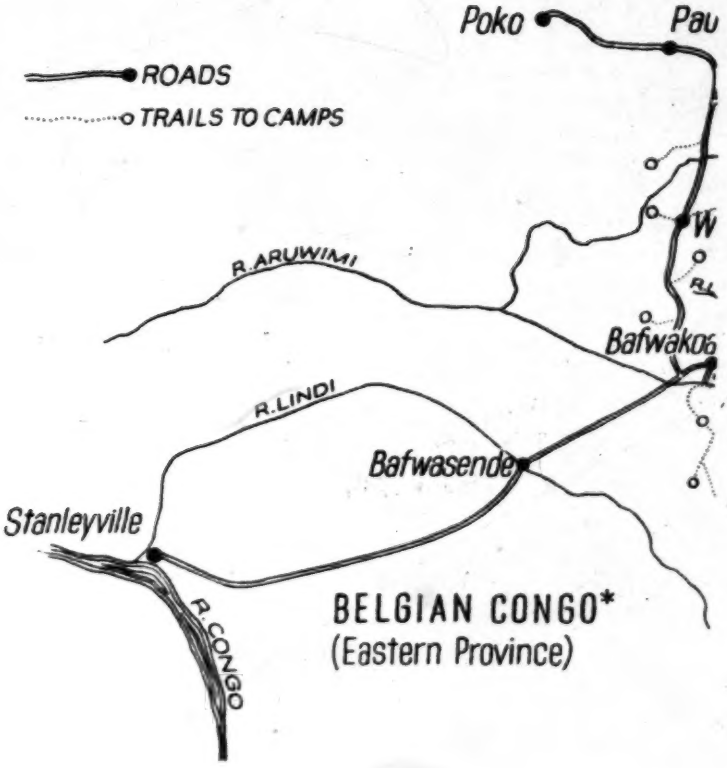
When Cephu arrived, three days after the establishment of the main camp, he built a camp (Plan 8) of his own a short distance away, then connected it to the main camp by a narrow trail. The trail leading from the sub-camp to the village was closed after some protest, as it effectively offered a second point of entry to the main camp from the village, through Cephu's camp. In the same camp as Cephu (FF) were two others—his kinsman, Masalito's older brother Abeli (DD), and Njelu's older brother, Toko (BB), who moved from the main camp the moment Cephu arrived. For some reason, at this point, Njelu moved back to his old hut adjoining Betuli. It was only a few yards further from Cephu's camp, but it was a significant few yards. Njelu and Toko had married two patrilineal cousins, so Toko's

2: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1965 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



The Epulu hunting territory.

102
103
133
487



MAP 1: The Eastern Province of the Congo.

*Now Republic of the Congo

[P. 10-B]

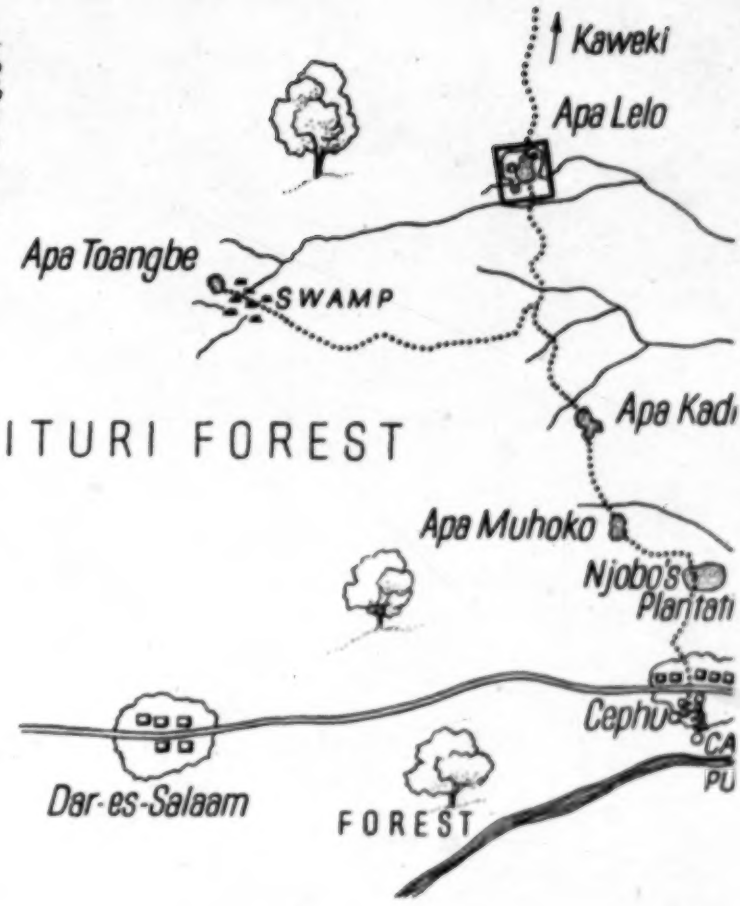
3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

102
103
133
487

Area of Map 2
[P. 10-C]

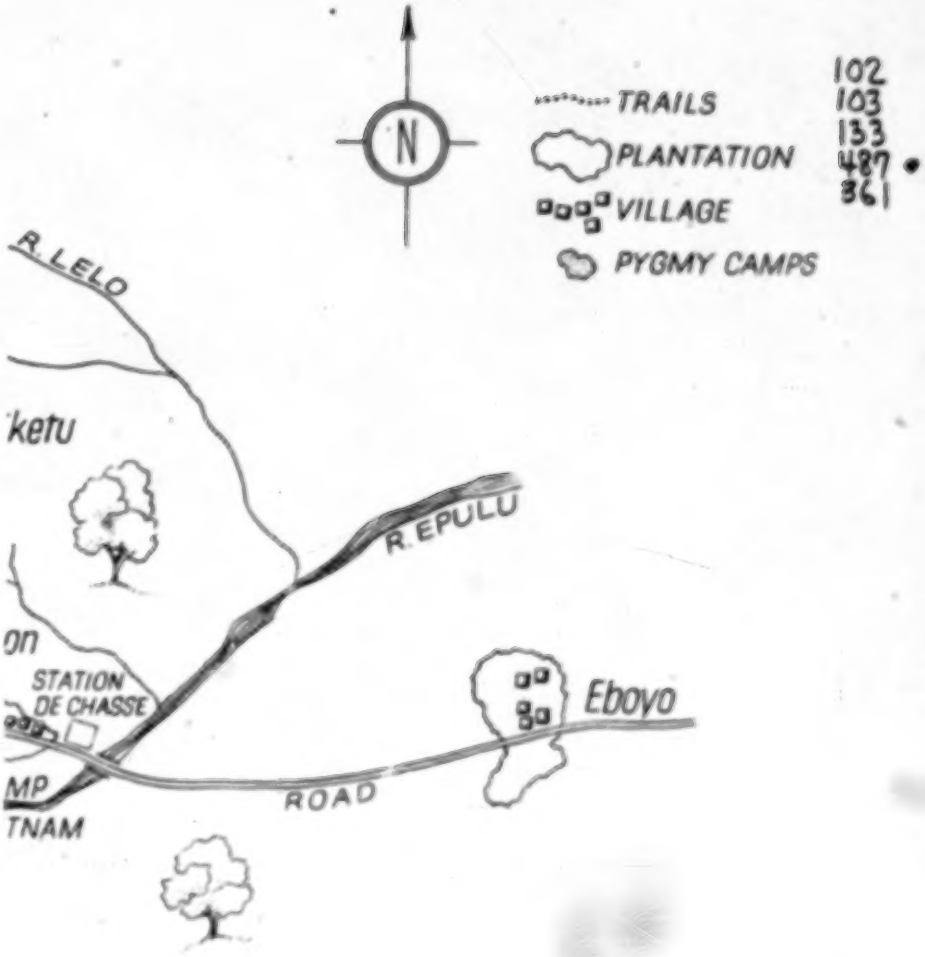
3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4 Mbuti

102
103
133
• 489
361



MAP 2: Detail map of the Ituri Forest, showing approximate positions of Pygmy camps, trails and plantations.
[P. 10-D]

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti



Area of Map 3

[P. 10-E]

3t Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti
Congo-Kinshasa FO1

a tangle of fallen trees and ever-spreading vines and creepers. Here and there where the *fito*—the sapling used by villagers for building their houses—had once grown, the tangle was even worse. Once the forest is cut it grows up again, not as the mighty primeval forest it was, but as a jungle of secondary vegetation that in places is almost impenetrable. We went in single file, for the most part following a path; when we left it the youths in front flashed their hatchets above their heads, slashing away overhanging branches and vines without even slowing up, to make it easier for us to follow. But where they cut they left sharp jagged ends sticking out at just about eye-level for me. When newly cut these dangerous points are plainly visible and easy to avoid, but when they become old and dirty they are a real menace.

After about half an hour we reached the place where the more ambitious Pygmies had tried to make a plantation; this was the farthest point from the new village of Epulu that the Negroes had reached when searching for the wood to build their houses. Beyond this they did not care to venture, except for an occasional one such as Kaweki, who made his living by trapping fish in the forest streams, and those who came to help him or to carry his fish to the market. Beyond this point, in Negro eyes, the forest was evil—full of animals, malevolent spirits, and Pygmies.

But for the people of the forest the world began at this point. There was a stream nearby, just beyond the "plantation," near a site where I had recorded the forest songs of these same Pygmies • three years earlier. In this stream, for no obvious reason, each of the five youths washed carefully, as though literally ridding their very feet of the dust of the village. Then they splashed through the cool, clear water and set off again with even greater vigor than before,

• Folkways Records: FE 4457, Pygmies of the Ituri Forest
FE 4459, Music of the Ituri Forest

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

singing snatches of songs and shouting back and forth to one another about all the animals they were going to kill and eat.

Occasionally we heard an echo of our own voices coming back from the depths of the forest. Then we stopped, and one by one the young men shouted bold phrases to imaginary maidens, holding their noses and mouths, ready to stifle the shriek of laughter that would come when the same rude challenge was shouted back at them. They clapped one another on the back and held onto one another for support as they laughed, inventing all sorts of things they would do and say to any girl who answered them in such a way. The Pygmy is not in the least self-conscious about showing his emotions; he likes to laugh until tears come to his eyes and he is too weak to stand. He then sits down or lies on the ground and laughs still louder.

As we went on the forest became more spacious, and it seemed lighter, although the trees still met high overhead and shut out all direct sunlight. There was no need to worry about overhanging branches now, for here the forest was virgin, untouched by the sacrilegious hand of the village cultivator, and clear of heavy undergrowth. The ground was soft underfoot, carpeted with leaves that sometimes concealed a projecting root. But the pygmies knew where every obstacle was, even though they could not see it, and they picked up their feet to avoid tripping.

On all sides we could see for twenty or thirty yards. The giant trunks of the old trees were surrounded by slender, branchless saplings, all so far apart that we could wander off the path freely at almost any point. Here and there the main path was crossed by a smaller path made by some animal, and Kenge frequently turned off and followed the animal trail, beckoning me to follow. A few minutes later he would stop and sit down on his bundle, and then when the rest appeared along the main path he would jump to his feet and make fun of them for "walking like the BaNgwana." The

for a rest took out her knife and went off to cut the branches and leaves needed to built their new home. Njobo shouted after her that she should get enough to build my house as well, saying that we would help her by collecting more leaves. He called to Masisi and Kenge, and I followed the three of them, wading across the Lelo and into the forest beyond.

The afternoon was already half spent, and by the light we could tell that the sky was clouding over. Njobo knew where there was a large patch of mongongo leaves. It was some distance off, but if we hurried we could get there and collect enough for all of us, he said, looking at me doubtfully. Kenge, ever practical, replied that I had long legs, so surely I would be able to keep up with them, and I would be useful as I could carry twice as many leaves as all of them put together. I did keep up, but only just. Because of the time and the approaching rain they followed small antelope trails instead of the larger buffalo trails, and in this way kept to a more direct route. But even they had to stoop as they ran along, and as they did not bother to cut the branches above their heads I had to go practically on hands and knees in places. Kenge was in front of me, and every now and then he warned me by a gesture of a thorny vine, so thorny that if you run into it unawares it can tear your skin to shreds.

We ran for half an hour without stopping, arriving at a thick growth of mongongo which stretched along the hillside for half a mile or more, down to the banks of the stream below. It was like a forest within a forest, the giant stems ending in the large heart-shaped leaves above our heads.

For a whole hour we cut leaves, working quickly and silently, cutting each leaf with a knife in the right hand, leaving a stalk about four inches long, and adding it to a bundle in the left hand. The others had to bend the plants down to reach the leaves, but even so they quickly accumulated small bundles. When they could hold no more in their hands they simply put the leaves down on the ground

3: Turnbull E-6 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 forest in the dark. He said the others would not be able to wait for
123 me if I dropped behind; this was a serious matter. As I hesitated he
481 added, in a loud voice directed at everyone in general, but particularly to Masimongo and Masisi, that the molimo had already sung to me
[885] and no harm had come of it. I was after all an adult, and of the forest, so there was no reason why I should not go with the others.

He was still talking as I caught up with Makubasi, who was hanging back to see if I was coming. We jumped into the Lelo, more swollen than ever, and struggled across. The water came up to my waist, nearly up to his shoulders. My shoes filled with sand and grit, but there was no time to take them off. As we made our way through the water the others ducked their heads and washed themselves, and I did the same.

When we climbed out on the far side, Ausu, leading, was halfway up the hill while I was still splashing around trying to find a foothold in the slippery bank. The forest was not dark yet, but it was
[487] very silent, and for once no one made a sound as we ran, following the antelope trails, toward the north.

3: Turnbull E-5 (1951-1956) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

4

The Song of the Forest

THE TRAILS WE FOLLOWED were narrow, and in places even the Pygmies had to stoop and bend. We ran at a steady pace without slowing up once. There was never any hesitating as to direction, even though there were times when it was difficult to see any trail at all. When we climbed upward we went faster because that made it easier to keep a footing. I was the only one whose feet made any noise; the others ran so lightly that they barely touched the ground but rather seemed to skim along just above it, like sylvan sprites.

After about forty-five minutes we came to a stream that was larger than the others we had crossed, though it was only a few yards wide

3t Turnbull E-8 (1951-1958) 1962 FO4 Pygmies FO4
Mbuti

765 534 422 [824] they went on to tell me how the trumpets are normally made, from the young straight molimo tree, a tree with a soft center that can be bored out laboriously, using different vines and woods as drills, twisting them between the palms of the hands. It took a very long time, they said, but this was the real molimo, and its voice was the best of all. Njobo used to have such a trumpet, but it had rotted away, and now all he had was a short bamboo one.

765 534 422 Kenge told me that the trumpet which Masimongo owned had originally belonged to Kenge's father, Adenota, and by rights belonged to him. But he said he couldn't be bothered with it. "It costs too much, and it makes too much work. Always going around collecting food to feed everyone. . . ." He shook his head in disgust. He had given it to Masimongo when Masimongo married his sister. He could have it back if he wanted, or he could make another, but it was all really too much trouble.

765 534 123 [789] [139] Maipe said nothing, but after a while, when we were moving off, he asked me if I would like to see the sleeping place of a trumpet. He led me along an antelope trail, so low that I had to go almost on hands and knees. It followed the banks of a stream and the mongongo plants grew thickly. After a while the stream descended a slope in small cascades, and the undergrowth cleared. We stood up and saw that water was all around us, rippling over rocks and coming together at the bottom in a sizable pool. Maipe looked around, then walked surely into a patch of undergrowth and called me. I found him at the foot of a tall tree, the base of which was hidden by thick bush. Through the bush ran a vine, looped around the tree about three feet off the ground. Maipe said that any Pygmy seeing that *would know that it marked the sleeping place of a molimo trumpet* and would keep away, for it did not concern him and the molimo should not be disturbed while sleeping. I asked where the trumpet was, and Maipe pointed up above his head. I could see nothing except the immense branches of the tree spreading out high above,

[824] [784]

leafy world that was theirs. One at a time they sang ribald little solos, each trying to outdo the others, the rest joining in with a throaty chorus that cascaded downward like a waterfall. Each girl held her note as the others came in after her, swelling the volume of a great chord of music until they had no breath left. Then they all stopped together, sharply and suddenly, and cocked their heads to one side to listen for the echo sent back to them by the forest.

And so we continued our noisy, festive way, until we had climbed up and down the forest paths for about an hour. On this side of the Epulu the forest was hilly, and at times the path was steep and difficult. But still the girls sang. At last we came to the edge of one of Sabani's hidden plantations, and the girls became silent. They made their way cautiously to the edge of a cluster of houses built in the middle of the plantation. This was where some of Sabani's relatives lived when they were keeping an eye on planting or harvesting activities. Akidinimba explained, in a gusty, confidential whisper, that her very special boy friend, Pumba, would probably be there. She was very much in love with him, she said, far more so than with any of the other boys. And she wanted him. The only trouble was that he did not seem to want her.

Having discovered that Pumba was indeed there, dozing on a chair in the baraza of one of the houses, the girls entered the village with a rush, shouting and yelling and brandishing their whips. Pumba awoke with a start, but he was too low down in the chair and could not get up in time to escape. He was plainly terrified, because in her determination to get her man Akidinimba had detailed all the other girls to go for him alone. When Pumba finally managed to break away and run blindly into the safety of the hut, slamming the door shut behind him, his body was covered with long angry welts, some of which were bleeding. Akidinimba wiped her nose with the back of her arm and smiled grimly. Well pleased with her success she simply sat down outside the door waiting for Pumba